

Landmarks Preservation Commission  
September 17, 1996; Designation List 274  
LP-1947

**MANHASSET APARTMENTS**, 2801-2825 Broadway, 301 West 108th Street, and 300 West 109th Street, Borough of Manhattan. Built 1899-1901, architect Joseph Wolf; enlarged 1901-1905, architects Janes & Leo.

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1893, Lots 1001 and 1002.

On May 14, 1996, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the Manhasset Apartments and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 8). Ten people, including representatives of Councilmember C. Virginia Fields, State Senator Franz Leichter, and Landmark West!, spoke in favor of the designation. The president of 108 Owners Corp., one of the owner entities, supported the designation. There were no speakers in opposition to designation. The representative of the other owner entity took no position on the designation. Many letters have been received supporting this designation.

#### Summary

Erected at the turn of the century, when the Upper West Side of Manhattan became the center of apartment house construction in the city, the Manhasset is one of the city's most imposing apartment houses. The building was designed and constructed in two phases. The lower eight stories of 1899-1901 were designed by Joseph Wolf. The second phase, consisting of grand entrance pavilions and three additional stories



incorporating a two-story slate-covered mansard, was added in 1901-05 by a new owner to the designs of Janes & Leo, a firm responsible for several of the Upper West Side's most prominent apartment buildings. The handsome limestone, brick, and terra-cotta Beaux-Arts style facades of the Manhasset continue to attract attention, creating an important anchor at the northern edge of the Upper West Side.

## DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

### Development on the Upper West Side<sup>1</sup>

The Upper West Side of Manhattan, stretching from 59th Street to 110th Street between Central Park and the Hudson River, remained a predominantly rural area of New York City until the arrival of an elevated rail line on Ninth Avenue (renamed Columbus Avenue in 1890) in 1879, which permitted people to commute to downtown neighborhoods. Although a few rowhouses were erected just before or shortly after the opening of the elevated, and the Dakota Apartments was begun in 1880, it was not until later in the 1880s that extensive development occurred on the Upper West Side, generally on the blocks east of Amsterdam Avenue, closest to the elevated.<sup>2</sup> Most of the new construction took the form of single-family rowhouses erected for middle- and upper-middle-class households, although a few early examples of apartment buildings for the middle class and some tenements for working-class families also appeared.

The western portion of the Upper West Side situated closer to the Hudson River was not initially affected by the opening of the elevated since speculative developers were more interested in building on sites convenient to the railroad stations at 72nd, 81st, 93rd, and 104th Streets and Ninth Avenue.<sup>3</sup>

It was not until the late 1880s and early 1890s that large-scale development commenced west of Broadway, in the area that began to be known as the West End District. By the mid-1890s, most of the side street property between Broadway, West End Avenue, and Riverside Drive south of West 96th Street, and most of West End Avenue had been developed with rowhouses. Only a few blocks at the northern end of the neighborhood remained largely vacant, awaiting investment from speculative builders.

### Apartment Buildings on the Upper West Side<sup>4</sup>

At the turn of the century, the Upper West Side became one of the most important centers for the construction of apartment houses for middle- and upper-middle-class residents in New York City. Not only were a significant number of apartment houses erected during this era, but some of these are among New York City's finest multiple dwellings.<sup>5</sup>

The most significant influence on the increase in the number of distinguished apartment buildings was the rise in land values that made the construction

and purchase of single-family homes prohibitively expensive for all but the city's wealthiest elite. Land values in Manhattan rose in general in the late nineteenth century with the pressures generated by a rapidly increasing population and an expanding commercial sector on a finite amount of land. Land values on the Upper West Side were also affected by the construction of the Interborough Rapid Transit Company's subway along Broadway.<sup>6</sup> The presence of the subway, with its rapid express service to Lower Manhattan, augmented the popularity of the Upper West Side, and dramatically increased the value of property, leading to a rise in apartment house construction, especially on Broadway near the new subway line.

The success of the Dakota and other similar buildings paved the way for the acceptance of apartment-house living by affluent households. The introduction of electricity on the Upper West Side in about 1896 permitted apartment house builders to replace the expensive, cumbersome, and slow hydraulic elevators with cheaper, faster, and more compact electric units. In addition, by 1900, the designers of apartment houses for affluent households had devised and refined interior plans with a separation of public rooms (parlor, dining room, and library), private rooms (bedrooms or chambers), and service spaces (kitchen and servant's rooms). The rooms in these apartment buildings were relatively large, ventilated and lit by large windows, and well-appointed with wood paneling, ornate plasterwork, and modern appliances.

The Upper West Side contains the highest concentration of fine turn-of-the-century apartment buildings in New York City, many designed in the most fashionable contemporary styles. Especially popular on the Upper West Side was the French-inspired Beaux-Arts style. Other buildings were designed in the form of Italian Renaissance palazzi or with neo-Gothic detail. Among the significant apartment houses erected on the Upper West Side in the last years of the nineteenth century and first years of the twentieth century are Beaux-Arts buildings such as the Dorilton (Janes & Leo, 1900-02) on the northeast corner of Broadway and West 71st Street, the Chatsworth (John E. Scharsmith, 1902-04) at 344 West 72nd Street, the Prasada (Charles Romeyn, 1904-07) on Central Park West and West 65th Street, the Langham (Clinton & Russell, 1904-07) on Central Park West between

West 73rd and 74th Streets, the Kenilworth (Townsend, Steinle & Haskell, 1906-08) on Central Park West at West 75th Street, and the St. Urban (Robert T. Lyons, 1904-05) on Central Park West and West 89th Street. Contemporary with these are the Italian Renaissance-inspired Apthorp (Clinton & Russell, 1906-08) on Broadway and West 79th Street and Belnord (Hiss & Weekes, 1908-09) on Broadway at West 86th Street and the neo-Gothic Red House (Harde & Short, 1903-04) at 350 West 85th Street.<sup>7</sup> The Manhasset is another important example of these distinguished early apartment buildings. All of this apartment house construction led a writer for the *New York Evening Post* to comment in 1907 that "what is probably the finest apartment house district in the world is that on the West Side of Manhattan Island between Fifty-fifth and One Hundred and Sixteenth Streets."<sup>8</sup>

#### The Development of the Schuyler Square Area

Schuyler Square is the small triangular park (now known as Strauss Park), located between West 106th and West 107th Streets, that is formed by the intersection of Broadway and West End Avenue. The area between West 106th and West 109th Streets, on and just west of Broadway, became known during the period of its initial development at the turn of the century, as "Schuyler Square."<sup>9</sup> This section of the Upper West Side had experienced very little development until the last years of the 1890s because this was the section of the neighborhood located the farthest from a rail line.<sup>10</sup>

With plans underway for the construction of a subway beneath Broadway with a station at 110th Street, developers began investing in construction near Schuyler Square, much of which took the form of single-family rowhouses. The blocks between West 105th and West 109th Streets between Broadway, West End Avenue, and Riverside Drive, are lined with what is probably Manhattan's largest concentration of turn-of-the-century speculative rowhouses.<sup>11</sup>

At about the same time that rowhouse construction began, apartment buildings appeared on Broadway.<sup>12</sup> Six apartment houses were under construction before work started on the Manhasset, the largest building in the vicinity of Schuyler Square.

#### The Manhasset Apartments: Its Site, Design, and Construction

The Manhasset Apartments has a complex history of design and construction.<sup>13</sup> It is actually two buildings occupying the entire two hundred foot long blockfront of Broadway between West 108th Street and West 109th Street and extending west onto the side streets for one hundred feet with an entrance on each of the side streets.<sup>14</sup> In 1899 the property was purchased by real estate investor Jacob D. Butler, who then sold it to John W. Noble, Jr.<sup>15</sup>

The builders John W. and William Noble, incorporated as William Noble & Co., began construction on the Manhasset in 1899.<sup>16</sup> William Noble was also the owner of such buildings as 3 Park Row, the Hotel Empire on Broadway at West 63rd Street, the Hotel Grenoble on Seventh Avenue between West 56th and West 57th Streets, and properties at Lake George, including the Fort William Henry Hotel.<sup>17</sup> The Manhasset was planned as two contiguous eight-story brick and stone structures, each with a flat roof. There were to be 25 units in the West 108th Street wing and 33 on West 109th Street. The new brick and stone building was designed in a Beaux-Arts style by Joseph Wolf (1856-1914), who had trained with Richard Morris Hunt, opened his architectural practice in 1886, and had supervised the construction of the North Wing (1890-94) of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.<sup>18</sup>

The Manhasset as designed by Wolf was completed by 1901, but no apartments were occupied because in that year the Nobles lost the property to Jacob D. Butler in a foreclosure action.<sup>19</sup> Instead of renting the apartments in the Manhasset, Butler chose to invest in enlarging the building. He commissioned three additional stories and other alterations from the firm of Janes & Leo, which had recently completed designs for two other prominent Beaux-Arts style apartment buildings on the Upper West Side -- the Dorilton (1900-02) on the northeast corner of Broadway and West 71st Street, and the Alimar (1899) on the northwest corner of West End Avenue and West 105th Street.<sup>20</sup>

The Janes & Leo design added a full ninth story atop the original eight stories, as well as a two-story mansard roof that is the most prominent feature of the building. The firm also added the impressive entrance pavilions, set into the light courts facing the side streets, and enlarged and reconfigured the light court on West 109th Street.<sup>21</sup> The enlarged

building had 33 apartments on West 108th Street and 44 apartments on West 109th Street.

The Manhasset is a particularly notable and distinguished example of the Beaux-Arts style in New York City. The facade has characteristic three-dimensional sculptural detail and is crowned by a steep mansard roof with slate shingles and large metal dormers. Especially monumental, the roof is the focal element of the highly visible building -- one of the few New York City apartment buildings that can be viewed from a distance. The open space of Schuyler Square (Strauss Park) and the curve of Broadway extending from West 103rd Street to West 108th Street place the Manhasset at the apex of an impressive vista.

As originally planned, the Manhasset contained large, generally well-laid out apartments. The largest units were in the West 108th Street portion of the building where there were only three apartments per floor.<sup>22</sup> The West 109th Street section of the Manhasset had four apartments on each floor, each with two bedrooms. An advertisement for the Manhasset boasted that it was a "modern, strictly fireproof apartment house...with every desirable feature necessary to personal comfort" and noted that the apartments "are provided with all modern improvements of latest patents."<sup>23</sup>

Members of prosperous middle-class households occupied the Manhasset upon its completion in 1905. The New York State census of June 1, 1905 recorded that thirteen apartments on 108th Street and 25 on 109th Street were already occupied.<sup>24</sup> The federal census of 1910 records more people living in the building.<sup>25</sup> Even as late as 1925, the last available census, most residents were members of professional families with servants.<sup>26</sup>

#### Later History and Alterations

When the Manhasset opened, it had apartments on the first floor facing Broadway, separated from the street by an areaway with a high iron fence. After the opening of the subway, Broadway became a major commercial thoroughfare. Most apartment buildings erected after 1905, such as the Apthorp and Belnord, had stores incorporated into the Broadway frontage. In 1910, the Manhasset was sold to Realty Assets Co., which hired Bronx architect Clarence Shumway to convert the lower story of the Broadway frontage into fourteen storefronts. Shumway removed the areaway along Broadway and designed a cohesive group of

storefronts with plate-glass windows, recessed entries, uniform signage, and a metal cornice.<sup>27</sup>

The population of the Manhasset remained stable until the onset of the Great Depression. By 1931, records indicate that two of the seven-room apartments were divided into three-room and four-room units. In 1932, the owner of the building was foreclosed by the mortgage holder, the Mutual Life Insurance Company. In 1939, Mutual Life vacated the building and hired architect Archibald D. Anstey to divide all of the large apartments into smaller units, creating a total of 136 apartments.<sup>28</sup> This major alteration, which probably included the redesign of the two entrance lobbies, was completed in 1940. At that time the building was reoccupied as a rental apartment house, a status it retained until 1993 when it was converted into a cooperative, with the previous owner retaining the stores. In 1995, one-over-one wood-framed sash were replaced by metal-framed sash, replicating the earlier configuration. In 1996, plans were filed for the restoration of the mansard roof.<sup>29</sup>

#### Description

The Manhasset consists of two eleven-story structures designed to give the appearance of one building with a two-story limestone base, seven-story brick mid-section, and a two-story slate mansard. The two-story rusticated limestone base sits on several courses of rock-faced limestone, visible only on the side streets elevations. Initially this rock-faced stonework was part of the walls of areaways that have been filled in. A limestone beltcourse runs above the second story at the sill level of the third-story windows, serving to divide the stone base from the brick stories above. The third through the seventh stories are clad in salmon-covered brick with window openings trimmed with light pink terra cotta. At the corners the bricks are curved. A terra-cotta entablature with an egg-and-dart cornice separates the seventh and eighth stories, serving as the sills for the eighth-story windows. The eighth and ninth stories are faced in brick with terra-cotta window enframements on the eighth story. A metal cornice separates these two stories. This cornice appears to be a replacement for the original bracketed cornice. A metal cornice with dentils and egg-and-dart molding separates the ninth story from the crowning two-story mansard. This cornice is seriously deteriorated and sections are missing. The cornice has a single bracket located in the center of the Broadway elevation (marking the

division between the two structures). The mansard is unusually steep and is articulated by metal dormers. It is topped by a metal cheneau<sup>30</sup> with brackets alternating with garlands. It has projecting central and corner cartouches. Roundels mark the corners of the mansard. Windows are one-over-one double-hung sash.

#### Broadway elevation

The long elevation facing Broadway is massed in an asymmetrical manner. The division between the West 108th and West 109th Street sections is visually marked at the center of this elevation by a slender slit in the brickwork running from the fifth to the seventh stories and by a vertical bar in the mansard. The windows on the Broadway elevation are set in vertical bands consisting of single windows, pairs of windows, and triplets. All of the windows originally had one-over-one wooden double-hung sash; in 1995 these were replaced with double-hung aluminum sash. In order to assist in describing this elevation, each window or window group has been given a number. Reading from left to right, the window groups consist of: 1) pair, 2) single window that results from the enlargement of the original small oval and rectangular bathroom windows, 3) pair, 4) single, 5) triple, 6) triple, 7) pair, 8) single, 9) single, 10) pair, 11) single. The pairs numbered 1, 3, and 10 consist of single windows with enframements surrounding both openings, while the two window openings at number 7 are set within a single enframement. Between bays 6 and 7, on the third through eighth stories, are small blind rectangular panels. These curious panels resemble the building's bathroom windows in scale; however, they actually align with a party wall separating two apartments.

**Storefronts.** Some original elements of the 1910 storefronts are still evident. A cornice with egg-and-dart molding runs above the storefronts and is extant along most of the facade. Originally all of the stores had uniform signage placed in a band below the cornice. These signs consisted of rectangular panels flanked by anthemia. One is still extant behind the present sign at No. 2805 and others may be extant below later applied signage and canopies.<sup>31</sup>

On the second story, all of the windows are cut into the limestone facade. Window groups 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, and 10 are capped by table lintels supported on brackets. Each of the lintels supports a florid,

French-inspired iron balcony. The following description applies to all windows except for the altered windows of bay 2. The small rectangular windows of bay 2 are now full-size openings with simple sills and no lintels. The windows on the third through seventh stories are set within continuous, vertical, terra-cotta enframements that are keyed to the brickwork. The spandrel panels between the third and fourth stories are ornamented with Elizabethan style terra-cotta panels. At bays 1, 3, and 10, the fourth-story windows are crowned by broken pediments supported by console brackets. In the center of each pediment is a cartouche. At bays 4, 7, 8, 9, and 11, the fourth-story windows are capped by table lintels supported by console brackets and capped by cartouches. The triplet window groupings in the center of the facade are capped by table lintels, each supported by six console brackets. Each of the lintels supports a central cartouche flanked by balustrade railings. All of the windows on the fifth and sixth stories have projecting lintels supported by small, box-like brackets. On the sixth and seventh stories, all of the windows have pseudo-balconies with attached balustrades (a number of balusters are missing). Above the seventh-story windows, each vertical window bay is crowned by a cartouche.

The eighth and ninth stories are faced with brick. The windows on these stories are arranged in the same pattern as those below and, on the eighth story only, they have terra-cotta enframements. The corners of the eighth story are marked by quoins formed from two courses of raised brick. Every other quoin continues across the facade as a beltcourse, interrupted only at the center to mark the juncture between the two buildings. On the ninth story, the windows have keyed brick surrounds.

The two-story mansard has an extremely steep slope. It has metal dormers with windows arranged in the same pattern as those below, except as noted. On the tenth story, all of the dormer frames have vertical panels ornamented with foliage and table lintels supported by brackets. Each of the lintels was originally the base for a pair of urns, all of which have been removed. The central triple window groupings are capped by segmental-arched pediments with cartouches in their tympana. On the eleventh story, the windows are capped by triangular pediments. At the triple groups there are only enframements around the central windows; the flanking windows lack enframements and are set flush with the facade of the mansard. At bay eight,

the double window becomes a single pedimented window with enframing flanked by narrow window openings also set flush with the facade of the mansard.

#### West 108th Street Facade

The West 108th Street facade consists of two wings separated by a deep court. An ornate limestone entrance pavilion fills the first story of the court. Several steps lead to the round-arched entry with its concave extrados capped by an ornate keystone. The base of the surround is ornamented with carved dolphins and seaweed. The double doors are glass with iron grilles, capped by a glass and iron fanlight with a decorative oval shield. An iron and glass canopy once shielded the entry. The entrance is flanked by pairs of projecting Ionic columns set in front of Doric pilasters. Flanking the columns are eared stone panels supported by rams' heads connected by garlands. These, in turn, are flanked by Doric pilasters. Bellflowers drip from the bases of the columns and pilasters. The columns and pilasters support an entablature with a bracketed cornice. In the center, above the entrance, is a tall segmental arch. Within the tympanum of this arch is a marble roundel surrounded by a heavy foliate garland and capped by a keystone. Four additional marble panels surround the roundel. To either side of the segmental arch, rising above the cornice, are stone orbs with bases enlivened with garlands.

The wings of the West 108th Street elevation are symmetrical with a pair of windows at the outer side of each wing and a single window closer to the court. The iron balconies, Elizabethan panels, broken pediments, cartouches, balustrades, raised brick beltcourses, and dormers described on the Broadway elevation are also present on the West 108th Street facade. The court is faced in unornamented brick, pierced by windows with

projecting sills and raised splayed brick lintels with limestone keystones. Both the east and west elevations of the court angle inward. The court elevations support unornamented fire escapes.

#### West 109th Street Facade

The West 109th Street facade is similar, but somewhat simpler than that on 108th Street. The doorway and entrance arch are similar, but the entry is flanked by only a pair of Ionic columns with Doric pilasters behind. This elevation also has wings separated by a court, but the wings are not symmetrical. The wing to the east has single, triple, single window groupings, while the wing to the west only has a triple window grouping. The three elevations of the court are articulated by projecting, angled, metal bays of varying widths. These bays have decorated spandrels, projecting keystones, and dentil moldings. Ornate iron fire escapes are located within this court.

#### West Elevation

The west elevation looks over a narrow light court. The portions of the facade closest to West 108th and West 109th Streets are clad in the same brick used on the street facades, but most of this rear elevation is clad in simple beige brick. The mansard extends onto this elevation for one bay at each side. At the remainder of the elevation, the eleventh story is completely faced in brick. The only notable features of this elevation are an angled metal bay close to West 109th Street and a corbelled brick cornice and corbelled brick chimneys. The rear court can be entered from West 108th and West 109th Streets through original iron gates.

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### NOTES

1. This section is largely based on material in *A History of Real Estate, Building and Architecture in New York City* (New York: Record and Guide, 1898); Sarah Bradford Landau, "The Row Houses of New York's West Side," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 34 (March 1975), 19-36; New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, *Riverside-West End Historic District Designation Report* LP-1626 (New York: City of New York, 1989); "The General Historical Development of the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District" prepared by Mirande Dupuy, Michael Corbett, and Elisa Urbanelli in New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, *Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District Designation Report* LP-1647 (New York: City of New York, 1990), 9-20; and Peter Salwen, *Upper West Side Story: A History and Guide* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1989).

2. This was probably due to the fact that in the late 1870s, elevated lines also opened on Second and Third Avenues. Most speculative builders turned their attention to developing the east side regions made newly accessible by the railroads, before turning to the Upper West Side, leading one commentator to note that "it is indeed one of the anomalies of the history of New York real estate that the West Side was so utterly neglected, save by the [land] speculator, for so long." *History of Real Estate*, 85. It was not until open land and available houses on the east side became scarce, that developers and home buyers turned their attention to the West Side. The 1885 *Robinson's Atlas of the City of New York* shows only scattered rowhouses development, much of it situated south of 72nd Street. Beginning in 1886, large numbers of speculative rows were erected.
3. This area did, however, hold out great promise for high quality residential development. Riverside Park and Drive, initially planned by Frederick Law Olmsted in the 1870s, provided an elegant landscaped boulevard and promenade at the western edge of the neighborhood. These blocks on the Upper West Side are substantially shorter than those between Central Park West, Columbus Avenue, and Amsterdam Avenue, creating the possibility of more cohesive blockfronts. This was due to the fact that the Bloomingdale Road, later known as the Boulevard, and then renamed Broadway, was not eradicated as the Commissioner's Plan had prescribed. Although its route was straightened somewhat, it continued to cut across the neighborhood, splitting the block that would have run between Amsterdam Avenue (originally Tenth Avenue) and West End Avenue (originally Eleventh Avenue) and at certain locations, notably at approximately West 78th Street and between West 103rd and West 108th Streets, it curves, creating unexpected vistas.
4. The major source for the history of the early development of the apartment house in New York City is Elizabeth Collins Cromley, *Alone Together: A History of New York's Early Apartments* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990).
5. The building generally accepted as the first apartment house in New York City planned expressly for middle-class tenants is the Stuyvesant, designed by Richard Morris Hunt in 1869 for a site at 142 East 18th Street between Irving Place and Third Avenue (demolished). The economic depression following the Panic of 1873 brought new apartment house construction to a virtual halt. When construction revived in the early 1880s, impressive apartment houses with distinguished facades and up-to-date interior appointments were erected in neighborhoods throughout Manhattan. These include such notable landmark buildings as the Dakota (Henry Hardenbergh, 1880-94), the first major apartment building on the Upper West Side; the Osborne (James E. Ware, 1883-85) on West 57th Street; the Chelsea (Hubert, Pirsson & Co., 1883-85; now the Hotel Chelsea) on West 23rd Street; the Gramercy (George Da Cunha, 1883) on Gramercy Park East; and the Washington (Mortimer C. Merritt, 1883-84) on Seventh Avenue in Harlem.
6. Planning for the city's first subway line began in 1894, with a route running from City Hall, north along Elm Street (now Lafayette Street) and Fourth Avenue (now Park Avenue South), to Grand Central Terminal. At Grand Central, the route turned west, running along 42nd Street (the tracks of today's Shuttle) to Times Square where the tracks curved north and continued up Broadway to West 96th Street. Here the system branched, with one line continuing north up Broadway to the Bronx, with a station at 110th Street convenient to the site where the Manhasset was erected. Actual construction on the subway began in 1901, with service inaugurated on October 27, 1904; in 1902 construction began on a southern extension that would connect uptown neighborhoods to the business center around Wall Street and the Battery. For a history of the subway system, see Clifton Hood, *722 Miles: The Building of the Subways and How They Transformed New York* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993).
7. All of these buildings are designated individual landmarks or are within the boundaries of the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District. This is also the era when large-scale apartment hotels, such as the exuberant Beaux-Arts style Ansonia (Paul E.M. DuBois, 1899-1904) on Broadway between West 73rd and West 74th Streets, were erected.
8. "West Side Apartment," *New York Evening Post*, September 7, 1907, p. 7.
9. Development in this area is discussed in Charles E. Schuyler, "Schuyler Square," *Real Estate Record and Builders Guide* 81 (April 11, 1908), 670.

10. Since there was no stop on the Ninth Avenue Elevated between 104th Street and 116th Street, it was a relatively long walk from these blocks to a train station. Schuyler reported that "in 1897 the only buildings in this section were a small 3-sty brick building on the southeast corner of 108th st...and a frame building east of the southeast corner 106th st." Ibid.
11. These include the handsome rowhouses erected in 1899-1902 in the Riverside-West 105th Street Historic District.
12. Schuyler noted that construction was undertaken on the area's first apartment building in 1897.
13. The only substantive article written on the Manhasset is Christopher Gray, "New Crown for an Upper Broadway Wedding Cake," *New York Times*, July 21, 1996, sec. 9, p. 7.
14. Historically, the Bloomingdale Road ran diagonally across this property. In the eighteenth century, the land was located within the extensive farm of Nicholas De Peyster. With the exception of a small triangle on Broadway north of 108th Street, the property descended through the De Peyster family, which began selling off portions of the family farm in 1826. The small triangle was the western end of a relatively narrow strip of land purchased on 1812 by John Jacob Astor. William B. Astor expanded the Astor family's holdings in 1864 to include the entire Manhasset site. William B. Astor sold the property to William Marcy Tweed (the notorious "Boss" Tweed) in 1871.
15. Conveyances recorded in New York City Property Records, "Conveyance Books," Block 1893, lots 13-20. New York County, Office of the Register.
16. New York City, Department of Buildings, New Building Permits 1075-1899 and 1076-1899.
17. Moses King, *King's Handbook of New York*, 2nd edition (Boston: Moses King, 1893), 227.
18. Dennis S. Francis, *Architects in Practice New York City 1840-1900* (New York: Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records, 1980), 83; James Ward, *Architects in Practice New York City 1900-1940* (New York: Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records, 1989), 86; Joseph Wolf obituary, *AIA Journal* 2 (Oct. 1914), 565. For Wolf's role at the Metropolitan Museum see Morrison H. Heckscher, *The Metropolitan Museum of Art: An Architectural History* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1995), 27-29.
19. This appears to have resulted from Noble's bankruptcy in 1899. Noble had acquired the *New York Mercury* as part of a real estate deal. The newspaper was losing money, but Noble refused to close it down. He ended up in debt for one million dollars and had to relinquish control of his real estate holdings. "William Noble A Bankrupt," *New York Times*, March 9, 1899, p. 11, and Gray.
20. Although Elisha Harris Janes and Richard Leopold Leo designed many apartment buildings and rowhouses on the Upper East Side and Upper West Side, most in the Beaux-Arts style, nothing is known about the lives or backgrounds of the partners. Other buildings designed by Janes & Leo are the rowhouses at 306-314 West 92nd Street (1901-02) in the Riverside-West End Historic District, 301-307 and 302-320 West 105th Street (1899-1900) and 330-333 Riverside Drive (1901-02) in the Riverside-West 105th Street Historic District, and 3-5 East 82nd Street (1900-01) in the Metropolitan Museum Historic District. The firm also designed the Leyland Apartments (1898-99), at 306-08 West 80th Street in the Riverside Drive-West 80th-81st Street Historic District, and All Souls Church (1900) on St. Nicholas Avenue in Harlem.
21. In the application to amend the building permit for the 109th Street wing, submitted on December 17, 1901, Janes & Leo "proposed to improve the conditions of light and ventilation of rooms on the main court by changing the original plan of this court from foundations to top...and to change the layout of rooms on all stories....It is further proposed to increase the height of the building by three additional stories." It is not known if the 108th Street court was similarly reconfigured.
22. These included two apartments with parlor, library, dining room, four bedrooms, kitchen, pantry, servant's room, and three bathrooms. The third apartment had only two bedrooms. Although the rooms were well integrated in the two larger apartments, the great depth of the building required the long dark interior halls that are an awkward feature of many New York apartments.
23. *Apartment Houses of the Metropolis* (New York: G.C. Hesselgren Publishing Co., 1908), 30-31. This three-page entry consists of a photograph of the building and plans of the first floor and upper floors. Plans plus photographs of the entire building and the 108th Street entrance are in *American Architect* 87

(May 6, 1905). A photograph and plan are also illustrated in Andrew Alpern, *Apartments for the Affluent: A Historical Survey of Buildings in New York* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1975), 40-41. In 1903 the property was transferred from Butler to the Manhasset Realty Corporation which appears to have been connected with the firm of Walter Reid & Co. Walter Reid & Co. marketed the apartments and, in the *Apartment Houses of the Metropolis* advertisement, referred to itself as the Manhasset's builder. The exact relationship between Butler, the Manhasset Realty Corp. and Walter Reid & Co. is not known. In 1905 an agreement was canceled between Jacob D. and Carrie M. Butler, Manhasset Realty Corp., Pierrepont Realty Co., Walter, Walter Jr., and Alexander Reid, and Walter Reid & Co. In 1908 a foreclosure action against the Manhasset Building Co. resulted in the ownership reverting to Carrie M. Butler (the wife of Jacob Butler).

24. Of the "heads" of household, most tenants were American born, but there were also a substantial number of German immigrants, as well as three single households headed by persons born in Canada, France, and Italy. Judging from the names, the residents appear to have been from various religious backgrounds. Heads of household were involved in business and professional work, including brokers, managers, manufacturers, lawyers, realtors, and bookkeepers. Almost every household had at least one servant and several had two or three. Most of the servants were young immigrant women, including those from Ireland, Germany, Hungary, and Holland, but there were a surprisingly large number of American-born servants, both white and African-American. There was also a single servant from the West Indies and one from Japan. New York State Census (1905), AD 21, ED Special 2.
25. They are of similar background and were in similar professions to the 1905 residents. Federal Census (1910), ED 729.
26. By this time the number of foreign born is slightly greater and more diverse, including heads of household born in Germany, Russia, Ireland, Romania, Hungary, and Turkey. New York State Census (1925), AD 11, ED 14. Judging from the names, a larger percentage of the residents appear to be Jewish than in earlier census counts.
27. New York City Department of Buildings, Alt. 1563-1910. Realty Assets only owned the building until 1913.
28. New York City Department of Buildings, Alteration Permit 2432-39. A violation issued in 1940 states that the building was "vacant and unfit for human habitation."
29. The work is being carried out under Notice of Review 96-0031. At the time of designation, the building was covered with scaffolding and netting to facilitate this restoration work. The windows were replaced under Notice of Review 95-0016.
30. A cheneau is a wide ornamental band placed at the top of a roof, usually a mansard.
31. At the time of designation, the storefronts were further obscured behind a sidewalk bridge erected in conjunction with the restoration work at the upper stories.

## FINDINGS AND DESIGNATION

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture and other features of this building, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the Manhasset Apartments has a special character and special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage, and cultural characteristics of New York City.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, the Manhasset Apartments is a significant example of Beaux-Arts style apartment house design; that it is one of the most imposing apartment houses erected on the Upper West Side at the turn of the century, when the Upper West Side was the center of apartment house construction in New York City; that the building displays one of the city's most impressive mansard roofs, an element designed by the architectural firm of Janes & Leo; that the building is further ornamented with handsome entrance pavilions and such fashionable Beaux-Arts details as cartouches, brackets, and broken pediments; and that the Manhasset Apartments continue to attract attention, creating an important anchor at the northern edge of the Upper West Side.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 74, Section 3020 of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 3 of Title 25 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as a Landmark the Manhasset Apartments, 2801-2825 Broadway, 301 West 108th Street, and 300 West 109th Street, Borough of Manhattan, and designates Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1893, Lots 1001 and 1002, as its Landmark Site.



Manhasset Apartments, 2801-2825 Broadway, 301 West 108th Street, and 300 West 109th Street, Manhattan  
View of Broadway and West 109th Street facades

Photo: LPC, 1983



Manhasset Apartments, 2801-2825 Broadway, 301 West 108th Street, and 300 West 109th Street, Manhattan

View of West 108th Street facade

Photo: LPC, 1983



Manhasset Apartments, 2801-2825 Broadway, 301 West 108th Street, and 300 West 109th Street, Manhattan

View of West 109th Street facade

Photo: LPC, 1983



Detail of 301 West 108th Street entrance pavilion  
Photo: LPC, 1983



Detail of West 108th Street wing  
Photo: Carl Forster, 1996



Detail of windows - 3rd to 5th floors  
Photo: Carl Forster, 1996



Detail of windows - 5th to 7th floors  
Photo: Carl Forster, 1996



Detail of pediment above 4th floor windows - West 108th Street wing

Photo: Carl Forster, 1996



Detail of mansard roof - West 108th Street wing  
Photo: Carl Forster, 1996



Detail of west elevation at roof level  
Photo: Carl Forster, 1996

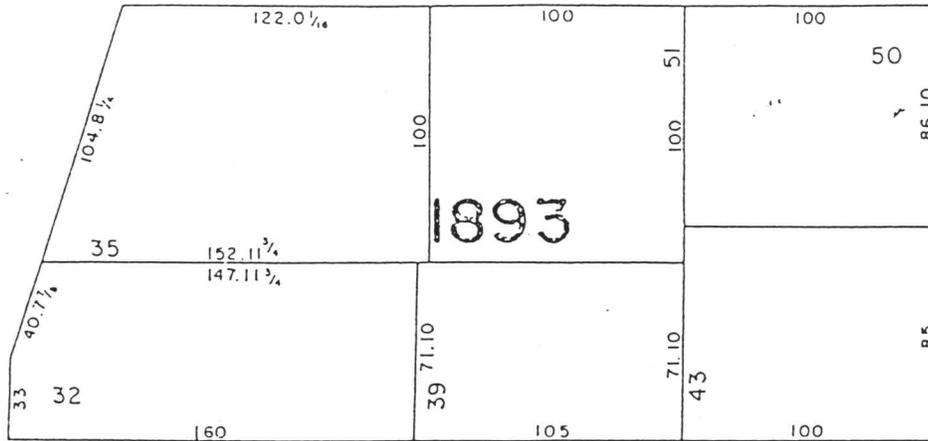


The Manhasset Apartments, c. 1920

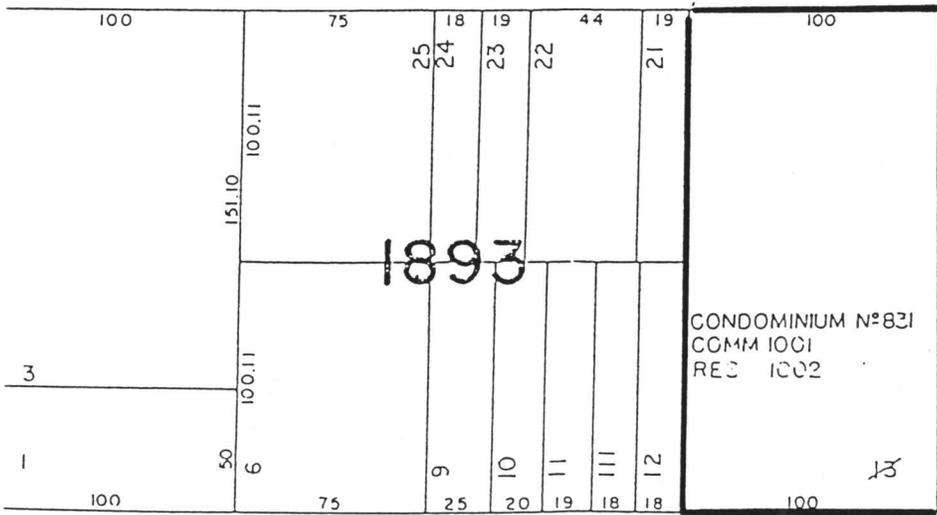
Source: Andrew S. Alpern, *Apartments for the Affluent* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1975)



# CATHEDRAL PARKWAY



W 109<sup>TH</sup> ST.



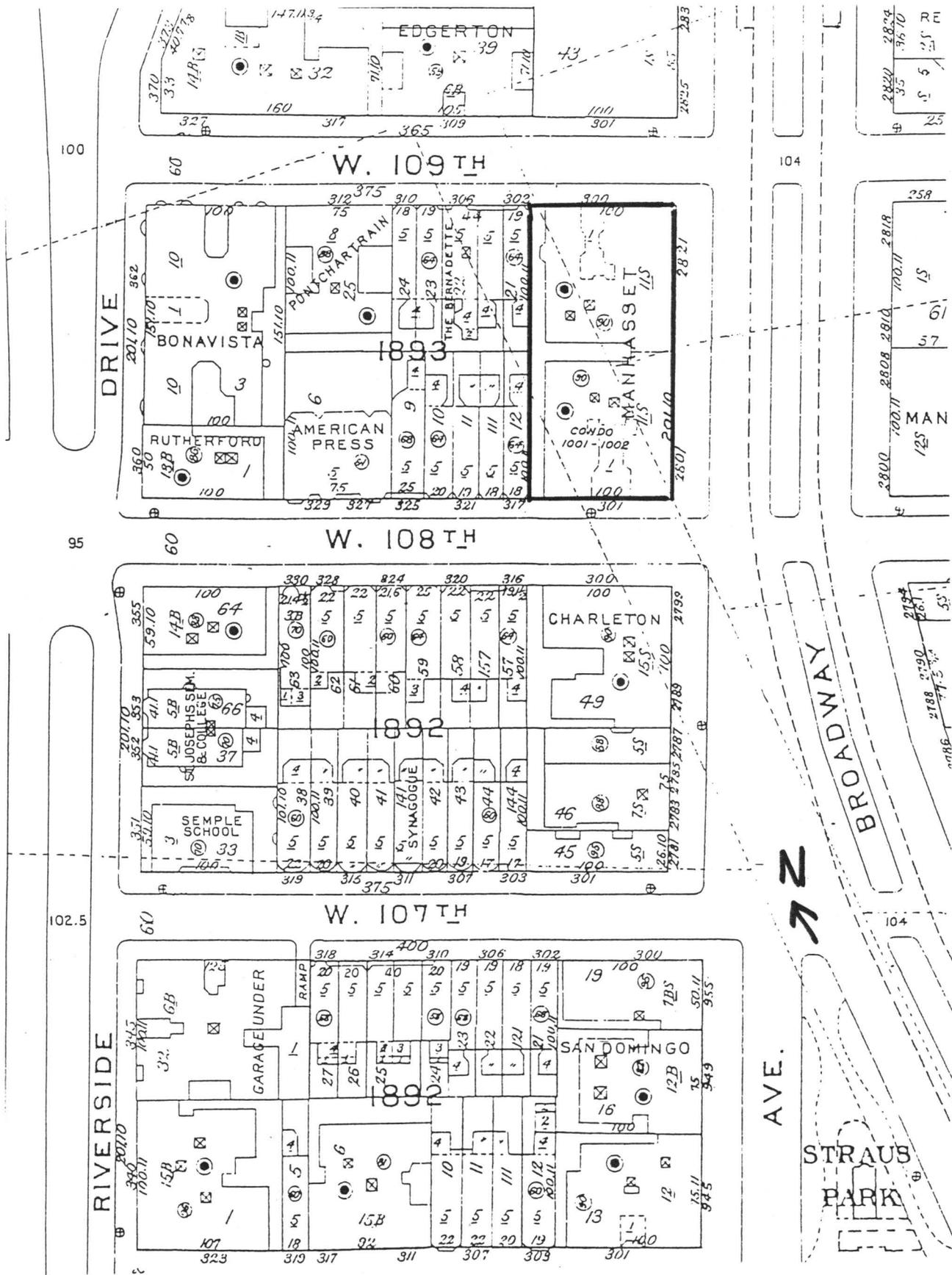
W. 108<sup>TH</sup> ST.

BROADWAY  
BOULEVARD

Manhasset Apartments, 2801-2825 Broadway, 301 West 108th Street, and 300 West 109th Street, Manhattan

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1893, Lots 1001 and 1002

Source: Dept. of Finance, City Surveyor, Tax Map



Manhasset Apartments, 2801-2825 Broadway, 301 West 108th Street, and 300 West 109th Street, Manhattan

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1893, Lots 1001 and 1002

Source: Sanborn, *Manhattan Land Book* (1995-96), pl. 102